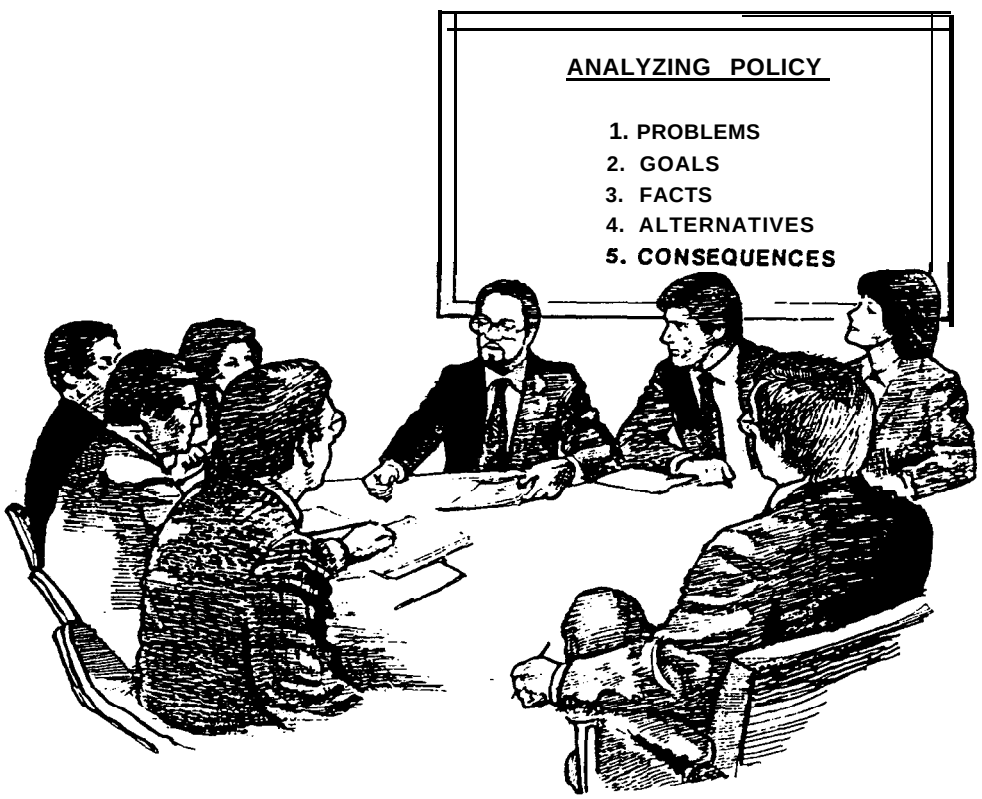
UNIT III

Policy Development



UNIT III

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

*After completing this section., you will know how to analyze the **effect** of policy on your specific emergency management roles and how to use policy analysis in the development of new policy. Policy analysis **(process)** will be **defined** by your instructor as a specific procedure that can be used to better understand the issues, the alternatives, and the consequences of choices associated with particular policy decisions in emergency management. An introductory reading and some exercises, which stress some of the problems that a policymaker faces, are included*

*Your instructor will stress that policy analysis is the intellectual activity of clarifying the problems in a way that will help the **decisionmaker** make the **right** choice. Space is provided for taking notes.*

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS POLICY CHECKLIST FOR LOCAL OFF'ICIALS

ARE YOU PREPARED?

What follows are some important policy issues which key local officials have had to face in a local disaster or emergency. Can you answer "yes" to each of these?

EVACUATION

Do* you *know...	YES	NO
Who orders an evacuation?	____	____
What circumstances warrant evacuation?	____	____
Who is in charge of an evacuation?	____	____
Where evacuees are taken?	____	____
How they are transported?	____	____
Whether they can be forcibly evacuated?	____	____
What is the policy on evacuation of pets?	____	____
What is the policy for looters?	____	____
Who is responsible for shelter management?	____	____

EMERGENCY

Do **you** *know...*	YES	NO
Who declares a local emergency?	____	____
What authority does a declaration of emergency give policymakers?	-	-
If liability questions are addressed by a declaration of emergency?	-	-
Whether **our** emergency actions are legal?	____	____

INFORMATION

Do you know...	YES	NO
If we have reliable information upon which to base public policy?	-	-
If we have a policy on how information is to be communicated to the public?	____	____
What information the public needs?	____	____

MEDICAL

Do **you** ***know...***	YES	NO
Who orders medical personnel into the field?	____	____
Whether there are medical personnel who will respond to such an **order?**	____	____
If a hospital needs to be evacuated, who bears the cost?	____	____
Who receives the evacuees?	____	____
Who is responsible for liability if a patient dies during transport?	____	____
How long it takes to evacuate a hospital?	____	____
If there is a hazard to the health and/or lives of hospital personnel (such as a hazardous airborne substance), what is the policy regarding both patients and personnel?	____	____
Who releases casualty information?	____	____
Who is responsible for emergency medical aid?	____	____

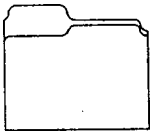
PUBLIC SAFETY

Do you know...	YES	NO
If there is a policy for handling terrorist activities?	____	____
What our responsibility is toward hostages?	____	____
Whether we can accommodate the demands of terrorists to secure the release of hostages?	____	____
Whether during a civil disobedience incident, we negotiate with leaders of the unrest or arrest them?	____	____
If snipers are shooting at firefighters, if we let the area burn?	____	____
Who is responsible for law and order?	____	____

PRIVATE PROPERTY

Do you know...

	YES	NO
If private property can be commandeered during an emergency?	____	____
Who pays for private sector resources if utilized during an emergency?	____	____
If we can destroy private property during an emergency? Under what circumstances?	_____	
Who orders the use or destruction of private property?	_____	



RECORDS

Do you know...

	YES	NO
Who is responsible for documentation of actions, costs, etc., as proof for later claims for reimbursement?	_____	
How we will make sure that all the necessary information is brought together in one place?	____	____

SCHOOLS AS SHELTERS

Do you know...

	YES	NO
Who has the authority to utilize schools as shelters?	_____	
Who has the authority to order the use of school buses?	_____	
Who is in charge of shelters in schools?	_____	
Who is responsible for costs or liabilities incurred from such use of schools?	_____	

UNIT III: POLICY DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION TO POLICY ANALYSIS

In the first section of this unit, two aspects of a very important tool in decisionmaking--policy analysis--will be examined. As public officials, you have obviously become adept at isolating certain problems and makmg decisions on how to deal with them. For a mayor, the first problem of how to get elected was addressed by analyzing voters and assessing opponents. Other factors were considered, such as the cost of campaigning, public exposure of private finances, and the strains on the candidate and family. Most often, such analysis is not a formal undertaking, but a combination of gut reactions and advice from trusted political friends. Those who were defeated made the same analysis, but came to the wrong conclusion--and lost. Therefore, analysis, no matter how sophisticated, does not guarantee making the right decision; however, it is a tool to be used.

When emergencies threaten or the potential for a major disaster exists, problems surrounding the establishment and implementation of sound policies multiply. The public expects more from you during emergencies, and the potential for disaster is increasing. Lifestyles have changed and resources are strained by bigger demands and smaller real budgets. One proven method of confronting problems and marshaling resources to respond to those problems is policy analysis.

First, commonly accepted components of policy analysis, as customarily applied to problems found both in the private and public sectors, will be examined. Then there will be a short exercise to demonstrate how any policy decision can have far-reaching ramifications--both positive and negative. Then, the focus will be on the unique circumstances surrounding policy analysis during a crisis and in the pressure period immediately preceding an anticipated emergency. Taking these unique factors into account, some basic policy analysis skills will be used and applied to formulating policies to deal with crises. Again, there will be a brief exercise to show how relatively minor policy decisions can have dramatic consequences.

WHAT POLICY ANALYSIS IS NOT

Mention the word ***analysis*** to a typical elected official, and the likely response will be planning. Policy analysis is not planning or management. Both planning and management are important elements in an objective analysis of policies, but they are not the same thing. Essentially, policy analysis precedes the other activities--it sets the stage, defines the problem and goals, examines alternatives, proposes answers, and tests results. It is a process in which top decisionmakers must participate. Planning is a more detailed second step that may change some of the basic assumptions used in policy analysis. It primarily is designed to work with specific components, not to appraise overall policy qustions. Planning provides a road map to carry out directives established in the policy analysis process.

Management is the hands-on implementation of planning. It gets the job done. Too often, management in both government and industry is not supported by either planning or rational policy analysis, but rather is driven by tradition, personalities, and gut feelings. Policy analysis establishes a goal, planning charts a course, and management moves toward the goal. Planning and management must be considered in sound policy analysis, and all three concepts overlap. But, in the context of this course, policy analysis is a function distinct in character from both planning and management, and is, by its very nature, something that cannot be delegated to staff, specialists, or administrative assistants. It requires a very broad range of practical skills--the type of skills most elected officials bring to their jobs.

DEFINITION OF POLICY ANALYSIS

To define policy analysis, a number of terms are used, such as cost-benefit analysis, systems engineering, or economic modeling. A great deal of time can be spent studying policy analysis and its techniques, delving mto its mathematical models and statistical sampling methods. Bypassing many of the intricacies of professional analytical jargon, policy analysis simply is *a way of structured thinking used to understand an issue by exploring a wide variety of possibilities, by examining alternatives for action, and by attempting to determine the consequences of taking one of the proposed alternatives.* The determination is made in one of two ways--by modeling or by comparing what has happened in similar situations in other areas.

The concept of policy analysis is both simple and complex--and it has political risks. The risk is inherent because it frequent1y runs counter to the manner in which political decisions are made, which is satisfying short-term needs or catering to special interests. A comprehensive policy analysis, complete with modeling, could demonstrate before that decision is implemented that another course is better for the general public, more efficient, or less costly. That information can be regarded as good or bad, depending upon one's perspective.

POLICY ANALYSIS PROCESS

The policy analysis process can be divided into four steps.

Step One--Setting A **Goal**

Intuitive skills, as well as scientific talent, are required to establish a goal. Generally, a goal is a broad statement or desire, such as providing safe streets, preserving the environment, or offering adequate recreational facilities. The motivation to select such a goal usually comes from the response to demands of constituents or an assessment that something needs to be accomplished. Traditionally, public officials look at safety,

environmental, and recreational goals in rather narrow contexts. Such a tunnel view, more often than not, hides many optimum alternatives.

Example Having safe streets means more than strengthening the police department by simply adding reinforcements in personnel. It is a much larger problem that could involve economic development, a jobs program, zoning laws, traffic patterns, public transportation, placement of a convention center, or the public schools. Using the systems approach, a *goal* becomes a target that provides a direction. Once into the process, the goal could change. For instance, the real problem may not be the immediate one of having safe streets, but a larger one of adjusting the town to urbamzation or industrialization.

Step Two--Defining the Problem

This is perhaps the hardest initial step in policy analysis. It requires looking at a problem in functional terms, *not* lust in accepted organizational terms. A system is an interacting or interdependent group of items forming a unified whole in which the "whole" attempts to fulfill the goals. It has boundaries that can be defined, and it has subsystems or individual elements that are integrated in structured forms.

Example A fire department is, in one sense, a system composed of numerous subsystems, such as the fire prevention bureau, arson investigation unit, administration (command staff), and suppression forces. The suppression forces are further broken down into subsystems of battalions and engine companies. The boundaries for the system called a fire department are its organizational limits. However, using the systems analysis approach to examine the objective of providing fire safety for citizens means the fire department is *not* the system; it is only one of several possible subsystems. The total system for fire safety includes the building department, fire services, police department, the city attorney's office (for ordinance development and enforcement), the State fire marshal, the economic development agency, the city and county courts (adjudication of fire safety laws and arson prosecution), public schools, and possibly many more subsystems.

The common bonds of any system, such as in the fire safety illustration, are shown below.

- A system is an entire set of things (organizations, people, laws, etc.) that relate to a goal.
- A system is structured and has discernible boundaries.

- A system is composed of subsystems that interact with one another and with the outside environment.
- A system has some mechanism for controlling its activities.
- A system always is in dynamic flux; it is changing both internally and externally to meet changing conditions.

There can be many other attributes to a system, but the five listed are basic to defining the concept. It should be noted that boundaries in the broader system often do not correspond to traditionally accepted organizational boundaries. The most significant example is a system that must deal with a problem that spans the artificial geopolitical boundaries of towns, counties, and states.

Example A transportation system may be viewed as the street grid of a particular town in this case, a suburb adjoining a major city. The policy analysis goal is to better move people (not vehicles) through the transportation system. The boundary of the problem is not the corporate limits of the individual town. The limits are regional; they include the city, other suburbs, the county, and the Federal government. Furthermore, if policymakers thmk of transportation as moving cars and trucks along streets, they have *not* defined the system, but only part of it. Such a definition omits rapid rail alternatives of subways, surface rail, and aerial lines, overlooks bus systems, both public and private, and neglects pedestrians. Also, movement can be blocked if adequate parking is not provided, or clogged if ample parking encourages excessive use of private vehicles. Therefore, the total system in this example is every identifiable entity that affects the movement of people.

Step Three--Gathering and Analyzing Facts

While defining a system forces you to consider the whole, the process of analysis demands examination of its parts. Using the systems analysis method in problem-solving (reaching goals), you may be required to call upon a wide variety of department heads, outside government leaders, and private-sector managers. Once the system has been totally defined, then each subsystem must begin the task of assembling information and analyzing it. It is in this step of policy analysis that planning and management overlap. Planners, professional consultants, and trained analysts are Important elements in gathering material and subjecting it to preliminary analysis. The decisionmakers set the goal, outline boundaries, then define the system. Staff and support personnel carry out the broad outline of the project by assembling data and deciding which are appropriate and which are not.

At this stage, new directions may have to be established. For a practical politician, one of the first limiting factors in analyzing facts is whether he or she can have an immediate effect.

Example A mayor might be able to hire or fire department heads or introduce a new budget to accomplish a given policy goal. However, that same mayor has little ability to change the operations procedures of a chemical plant located two miles outside of town. While it may be obvious the plan has a considerable effect on the mayor's home town employment picture, affects air quality over the city, causes intercity traffic patterns to change, and may even pose a potential toxic gas hazard for the city, the mayor probably will have no authority to make short-term changes on the management of the plant.

In such a case as outlined in the example above, an altered policy goal might be to amend State chemical plant siting laws so that governments within the plant's impact range can exercise some control over operations. This long-term goal could emerge after the mayor's legal analysts had collected State and local codes and determmed that the mayor lacked sufficient authority. The new-direction decision to pursue a policy goal of lobbying State legislators for increased local government authority over private industry will have to be made by the elected official, not by the analysis staff. The analytical process involves a number of sophisticated testing procedures. Professional analysts. employ a number of devices to determine if data under examination will have a positive or negative effect, the degree of that effect, and whether the effect can be altered. For the elected official, the process of fact gathering and analysis means collecting a wide range of information, selecting that which is relevant to the policy goal, and analyzing its relationship to the total project.

Example A fire chief is lobbying for the city to buy a $175,000 truck. The short-term goal analysis of efficiency in equipment purchases commonly centers on comparative studies of similar equipment, how such equipment is used, and whether buying that single truck is worth not having sufficient funds to purchase other needed equipment. But the larger policy goal, as previously described, is providing fire safety. In the total systems concept of providing safety rather than equipment, not only are cost factors within the fire department examined, but also expenditures in other areas. It is quite possible that spending $175,000 on the truck and paying for annual maintenance., fuel, operation, and storage would be both beneficial to the citizens and cost-effective. But, there is an equally high probability that if equipment resources were applied to building inspections or enforcement of fire ordinances were collected and analyzed, the purchase of the truck would be an inefficient, cost-ineffective alternative. If the fire chief is the

mayor's brother-in-law, analysts will have yet another factor to ponder.

Step Four--Determining Alternatives and Consequences

Every problem has a variety of possible alternatives; however, only some can be applied given the real-world constraints of time, money, jurisdictional authority, personnel, technology, State and Federal laws, and the current political atmosphere. Some problems, such as urban decay, environmental degradation, and unemployment, are so pervasive and complex that solutions may never be found; only remedial bandages can be applied. In reviewing alternatives, decisionmakers are faced with the possibility of choosing courses of action that will worsen a problem, help alleviate a problem to varying degrees, or not affect the problem at all.

Problems have been defined, facts gathered, initial analysis completed, and a number of alternatives are now before you. Many options can be eliminated by your team of department heads, advisors, and planners as being too costly or beyond the technical or legal capability of your administration. Those remaining choices then must be evaluated as to their possible effect on the entire system. Systems functioning within the local government context must, by their very nature, include political and social considerations. While several alternatives might look great on paper, ultimately they must stand the test of political realities.

This last step in formal policy analysis is not an end. Evaluating alternative courses of action is a continuing process. Once a decision has been made and implementation begins, decisionmakers and their staffs must monitor progress and assess reactions. An alternative can be selected as a result of sound analytical procedures, implemented with the very best plating and management, and still go awry. There are many reasons--changed circumstances, facts coming to light that were not originally available, and the unpredictable nature of human political and social institutions. To compensate for various effects of a decision, testing is done and adjustments are made.

Example ***The*** fire chief (the same one who wants to purchase the $175,000 truck) has determined that a new fire station should be built. A cost analysis has been completed, transportation planners have worked out a sophisticated fire response route system, and a computer analysis of fire call concentrations has determined the area of greatest need. Every routine policy analysis position indicates the station should be constructed within a specific four-square-block area. But the chief and city hall leaders did not consider human factors; the proposed station site is at a collection of historic buildings. Preservationists are outraged at the idea. What is more, members of low-income communities who do not have their own firehouse are disturbed that the city government will spend money on another part of town when then sector so

badly needs new construction. It seemed that the alternatives were examined with consideration of the total effect. But in evaluating the proposal, the sociopolitical reactions were not properly assessed.

METHODS USED IN POLICY ANALYSIS

To enhance the usefulness of these four policy analysis steps, professionals employ a number of methodologies. We will not attempt to review all of the mathematical or statistical processes used in the trade.. Instead, we will concentrate on three basic methods of applying the tool of policy analysis to the best advantage in dealing with local government problems. The methods center on

- system identification,
- Mixed team development and review, and
- Scientific methods.

System Identification

Local government, at all levels, has many systems that are not functional. These systems are departments or agencies that have developed over time in response to various political pressures or past problematic needs. They might be assemblies of subsystems concentrated under a strong personality--for the sole purpose of fulfilling the needs of that individual rather than the needs of government or the citizens.

In identifying systems in the policy analysis process, it is important to look beyond the traditional structures and the strong personalities to delimit functional systems. The primary function of policy analysis is to accomplish specific goals in an optimum manner. Optimum can be defined as saving taxes, conserving personnel, using current resources at their maximum level, or just accomplishing a task without creating other problems. Past practices may have to be altered or scrapped and individuals moved or removed. An objective system, by definition, cannot exist unless it is structured to reach clearly defined goals.

There is another aspect of working with systems analysis, and that is the presence of hidden agendas. Every politician has one--so, too, do almost every department head, ambitious civil servant, and special interest group. There are two options in confronting the dichotomy of ***objectively structured systems*** versus ***hidden*** agendas--either reveal hidden agendas so everyone analyzing a problem understands the rules of the game or acknowledge that hidden agenda forces will affect the policy analysis project and design that factor into the analytical process. If the mayor or governor has a hidden agenda of

not wanting to risk confrontation with special interest groups because of re-election plans, that definitely will affect likely responses to threats of civil unrest. Conciliation, under such circumstances, would probably be chosen over a massive show of force. The police chief had better understand that before sending out the troops in response to unrest in selected neighborhoods.

Mixed Team Development and Review

As you move from routine policy analysis to establishing policy under emergency situations, the importance of having a mixed team to develop and evaluate policy becomes more apparent. Under the best circumstances, problems seldom fit neatly into the structures we have created. The broader the base, the better the understanding of the problem, and the more likely optimum alternatives will be developed. For example, the problem of fire safety obviously is one closely identified with the fire department. However, the fire chief and fire marshal cannot be expected to appreciate the wider questions or to pose various alternative policy goals. The establishment of fire safety policies within a jurisdiction will involve the following:

- The director of the water department (fire flow and reserve water capacity);
- The building director (fire code and zoning inspection and enforcement);
- The police (security, traffic control, and arson investigation);
- Ambulance service (in the majority of local jurisdictions, the private sector still provides ambulances and hospitals for medical treatment);
- The utility company (public or private control over natural gas and electricity); and
- Adjoining jurisdictions (mutual aid agreements and joint abatement of hazards).

The mixed team to establish and review policies surrounding fire safety can be quite large. It can extend to Federal agencies, such as the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management, which have reciprocal fire protection agreements with towns and counties adjacent to land they control. Obviously, as any team becomes larger, there are problems of internal control and maintenance of focused direction. Leadership becomes more important, as does the need for structure.

Some mixed team efforts begin with a brainstorming meeting where all of the potential effects are presented and catalogued. Strong direction is required to keep team members from digressing or becoming ensnared in petty bickering over protecting turf. **"How** does this relate to the goal?" is a question that must be asked repeatedly. Once a wide range of data are assembled and grouped into homogeneous units, the team can be subdivided into task forces to deal with specific concerns. Staff and professional

planners can be brought in to work out details and verify the relevance of data. The mixed team begins by creating as broad a base as possible, and then works to focus on details, eliminating less important data. As the team reviews the progress of policy analysis, it again can bring to bear its diverse background to evaluate potential reactions to various policies. This last item cannot be emphasized enough. If, for example, the mixed team used above does not consider legal or intergovernmental issues when developing a fire safety policy, any number of apparently excellent proposals could be valueless because they violate the law or do not recognize the unique needs of other governments involved in the project.

Scientific Methods

Scientific methods remove bias, subjectivity, and irrelevant comments as much as possible. They coldly look at the facts, question everything, and reach conclusions based upon tests.- There is a hitch--most human problems are hard to define and are almost impossible to test objectively on a broad scale. When a governmental body establishes a policy using a scientific method, ideally it would experiment. It would either use models to determine if the policy is practical or it would attempt to apply the policy to the real world to see what happens. In either case, there often is no clear answer. Returning to the previous example of fire safety, any policy designed by city decisionmakers may take years to implement. Scientific method dictates that reactions to that policy be continually monitored and evaluated. But so many outside variables are affecting the situation, it is extremely difficult to decide if government's action or other forces are causing change. An economic upsurge, totally independent of local governmental policies, might cause a rebuilding program in blighted areas of the city. A fire problem is thus removed and the overall fire safety picture improves. Was the improvement because of the government policy or because of outside forces? All that can be said here is that every effort should be made in sound policy analysis to review facts scientifically and to assess results--even though there may never be clear answers.

One scientific method used in making choices is the priority matrix. A policy team can list a number of possible reactions to a proposed policy, assign weights (value numbers), and determine which alternative is most *likely* to best serve the goal. Using fire safety as a goal, the following chart shows some of the matrix elements.

	Affects immediate government cost	Causes resentment in selected communities	Requires renegotiated labor contracts	Drains resources from other city programs	Totals
Increase the number of building inspections	+4	+2	0	+1	+7
Increase the size of the fire department response force	+11	-3	+2	+2	+12
Increase the fire department fire safety program	+5	-1	0	0	+4

Obviously, the matrix would be many times larger and include elements such as long-range government expense and projected rebuilding costs to developers, among others. In the sample matrix, all other things being equal, expanding the fire department fire safety program would be the optimum decision. It would disregard the tradition of not having such a program in this particular city, and it would counter the personality of the fire chief who believes in spending every fire dollar on suppression.

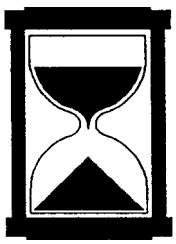
Under immediate costs to the government on the matrix, such items as wages and benefits would be considered. Using that single criterion, hiring more building inspectors appears to be the best choice. But, having inspectors go into private homes in some ethnic or low-income neighborhoods could cause a backlash that would produce more problems for the city. Further, hiring sufficient numbers of inspectors and the legal staff needed to prosecute violation citations definitely would drain resources from other city programs. Increasing the size of the fire response (suppression) forces would be the most costly of the three choices, but it would be the most politically advantageous in selected communities. For one thing, it could mean more jobs, and if hiring were opened to minorities, it could be a major boost to the city administration's public relations. However, such an undertaking would require renegotiation of the labor contract and might result in the police department's making demands for more personnel. While an increase in the fire department's fire safety program would be more costly in terms of immediate governmental outlays in comparison to the building inspector option, it has other advantages--such a program shows concern about citizens who feel neglected.

Using objective standards and sound evaluation techniques is the basis of the scientific method. It removes the public complaint that decisions were made to cater only to special interests.

Summary

Policy analysis is pragmatic. It deals with actions in real-world environments. Data are collected and evaluated; decisions are made and implemented. Then the process of monitoring, adjusting, and reassessing takes place. Policy analysis is not confined to sterile laboratories; it is designed for practical application in both the public and private sectors. Since the only method to determine ultimately if a policy is sound is by the application of that policy to actual problems, interaction with political and socioeconomic realities is absolutely essential.

EMERGENCY POLICY ANALYSIS



Now that you have been introduced to this topic, it is important to begin thinking about the differences between normal and emergency policy analysis.

Policy analysis under normal conditions has several implicit criteria:

- There is time to think;
- The option to gather a wide range of information exists;
- There is time for objective and candid exchanges of opinion; and
- There is an opportunity to test alternatives.

In essence, the systems approach to policy analysis is a thoughtful process. New-era emergencies, coupled with the public's increased expectations and the glare of instant media coverage, distort policy analysis and place decisionmakers at a distinct disadvantage.

When an emergency strikes, the implicit criteria that facilitate sound policy analysis under normal conditions are drastically altered or eliminated. The following are some explanations of the major effects of emergency situations.

Time Restraints

Time to weigh possible alternatives or to consider long-range implications either is very limited or does not exist during an emergency. When a dam is about to break, downstream residents must be evacuated immediately. There is no time to ponder the optimum means of transportation or the preference of relocation sites. When civil disobedience erupts in a city, there is no time to reflect over the socioeconomic undercurrents that precipitated the crisis. Action to restore order must be taken. The

absence of time is no excuse for bad decisions, and a wrong turn taken to alleviate a short-term demand can lead to long-term problems.

Changing Forums

Decisionmakers in both private and public positions have become accustomed to workmg out problems in established forums, such as before city councils, State legislatures, or corporate boards. The forums for decisionmakmg also include structured patterns of thinking, such as viewing problems from budgetary, political, or judicial points of view. In both classes of forums, there are defined limits and predictable responses. Decisionmakers learn to play the game and know what to expect if they do not. Modern emergencies change the game rules so drastically that many players do not know what to do. Urban riots, hurricanes, or nuclear plant disasters produce crises not limited to artificial boundaries of city, county, or State jurisdictions. Their effects are economic, social, political, technical, or environmental, to name a few. Emergencies, quite simply, do not respect established boundaries. As a result, customary forums (or systems) created to respond to routine problems are frequently inappropriate for contending with the demands of an emergency.

Randomness

Even age-old calamities, such as flooding, fires, and drought, followed some established patterns and created corresponding traditional human reactions. People threatened by floods moved to higher ground, those endangered by fire escaped from relatively simple structures, and those facing drought dammed rivers and built reservoirs. Known threats meant relatively simple reactions. But now we have introduced random disasters to the world. Anywhere, jumbo jets can fall out of the sky, crashing into schools or residential neighborhoods. Oil spills at sea can devastate the most secluded beaches and kill life-sustaining fishing beds. Toxic chemical spills, nuclear power plant accidents, nuclear waste disposal, environmental degradation from hundreds of sources, and ultimately, the potential of an all-out nuclear war have created a randomness that threatens everyone. Simply moving to higher ground cannot ensure safety. This randomness of disaster creates extreme pressures on planning and policy analysis.

Limited Options

A basic component of rational policy analysis is the examination of as many options as practical. Under emergency situations, options are severely limited or entirely eliminated. There are many factors. The worst is the inability to marshal resources because of the overwhelming scope of a disaster. Time is linuted; thus, options to bring personnel or equipment into position to affect a particular event may be reduced. Legal or jurisdictional constraints can prevent local decisionmakers from reaching the source of an emergency outside their area of authority even though it threatens their constituents. Because of the uniqueness of some emergencies or recent technical innovations, there may be no response yet developed.

A more subtle, but nonetheless important, constraint is the effect of public perception during an emergency. Under normal conditions, a policymaker can call upon a number of experts and resources to analyze a potential problem. But under the duress of an emergency, with the media watching every move, just calling a governor to inquire about activating the National Guard could be construed as meaning police have lost control. Therefore, the option to consider asking about possible Guard assistance is limited. The question itself becomes an action that could produce unwanted reactions.

Strain and Pressure

People and institutions are accustomed to normal series of events. When those events turn into an emergency or mushroom into a disaster, there are sudden strains and pressures. Systems, such as volunteer firefighting, transportation, or intergovernmental command structures, are designed to function within certain limits. The limits might include some provision for anticipated emergencies, such as a building fire or an annual spring flooding along the river. But when an anticipated emergency grows into a crisis, systems break down. The point at which collapse will occur often is unknown or underestimated. As a result, a mayor or governor may believe an option exists when it does not.

Decisionmakers, too, have their breaking points. The systems approach to policy analysis assumes objective leadership, but when a situation appears to be getting out of hand, there is a possibility that a key policymaker would be anything but objective. The pressures emergencies exert on individuals and systems are very difficult to assess because of many outside variables. For example, an emergency manager might be able to cope with an extremely serious problem on one day. However, on the next day, suffering from fatigue, bad health, or a pressing personal problem, the same manager might have a severely. reduced capacity to react to a lesser emergency. Equipment failures, communications collapse, or loss of key personnel can have the same effect on a system under stress.

Complexity

Anyone involved in daily management of a local government appreciates just how complex our world has become. Some observers argue that a big city has become so complex that no one can provide answers to all of the pressing problems. The situation is far worse in a crisis when complexities become magnified and distorted. It may have been difficult to make various departments within a city government work together under the best of times; it could be almost impossible during an emergency. Complexity affects policy analysis in three distinct ways.

- The systems we have created to respond to emergencies have become increasingly complex and, therefore, subject to greater possibilities of breakdown.

- The problems--types of crises--have become more complex. A nuclear plant accident is far more complicated to deal with than a flood. The same can be said for many of our new-era disasters.

- Our lifestyles are more complex. Because of our tendency to cluster in megalopolises, our dependence on technology, and the degree of sophistication of that technology, the potential effects of any single emergency are greatly compounded.

A fourth complexity could be added--the effect of instant media coverage. The existence of television cameras at the scene of an emergency, portraying public officials at work, adds a degree of complexity to any problem.

Reaction Void

A crucial element of standard policy analysis is the testing of possible alternatives and evaluating their effect in the real world. Part of the importance of this process is to enable leaders to adjust their actions if reactions are significantly different than anticipated. In an emergency there are several levels of reaction occurring simultaneously. There is the obvious reaction of responding to immediate survival needs. There also is a political reaction--people judging whether their government is performing as well as could be expected under the circumstances. There are long-range reactions, such as the social or environmental backlash to remedial corrective actions taken in the heat of crisis. As an example, the use of force is one alternative to quell civil unrest--to some officials, it is the only choice. Brute force might restore the peace, but in so doing it could plant the seeds of discontent that later would grow into an even larger confrontation. During an emergency, clear pictures seldom are presented as to how well particular policies are functioning. Your decision to do something in the face of a disaster might mean reducing the loss of life to only one percent of the endangered population. You could argue that if you had not taken drastic action, five or ten percent of the population would have perished. However, your opponents could argue equally well that had you taken another course of action, there would have been far fewer casualties. There clearly is a reaction void based on hindsight. No one may ever learn the truth, even months or years after a particular emergency. This reaction void causes uncertainty among decisionmakers.

Obviously, emergencies have other effects on policy analysis. But without belaboring the point, reacting to crises requires special talents and an understanding of emergency management.

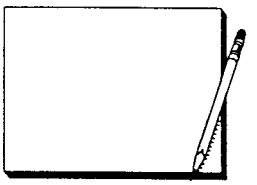
A helpful tool for the policy-level official in emergencies is The *CEO's* Disaster *Survival Kit*, published by FEMA. That and the list on the next page can assist you in emergency policy analysis.

PUBLIC POLICY CONSIDERATIONS IN EMERGENCIES

- Do you have reliable information upon which to base public policy?
  (Location, Incident, Damage, Resources)
- Do you have a policy on how information is to be communicated to the public? What information does the public need to know?
  (Media capabilities, Media Center)
- Who will be the spokesperson for the city? How will he/she be kept informed?
  (Public Information Officer [PIO])
- Should the city have a plan for dealing with the media during emergencies?
  (Media update and access policies)
- Who orders medical personnel into the field? Are there medical personnel who will respond to such an order?
  (Emergency Operations Plan [EOP], Health and Medical Annex)
- If a hospital must be evacuated, who bears the cost? How long does it take to evacuate a hospital?
  (EOP, Health and Medical Annex)
- Who has liability if a patient dies during transport? If there is a hazard to the health and/or lives of hospital personnel, what is the policy regardmg both patients and personnel?
  (Legal-Emergency Declaration)
- Who releases casualty information?
  (PIO)
- Who orders a general evacuation? What circumstances warrant evacuation?
  (E.O.P.)
- Who is in charge of an evacuation?
  (E.O.P. and Evacuation Annex)
- Where are evacuees taken? How are they transported? Can we forcibly evacuate?
  (E.O.P. and Emergency Declaration)
- What is the policy for looters?
  (Legal-Emergency Social Controls)

- What is the shelter management system?
  (E.O.P. and Shelter Annex)
- Who has the authority to use schools as shelters?
  (E.O.P. and Shelter Annex)
- Who is responsible for costs or liabilities incurred from such use of schools?
  (Legal-Emergency Declaration)
- Can private property be commandeered during an emergency?
  (Legal-Emergency Declaration)
- Who pays for private sector resources if used during an emergency?
  (Legal-Emergency Declaration)
- Who orders the use or destruction of private property?
  (Legal-Emergency Declaration)
- Who declares a local emergency?
  (Legal-Emergency Declaration)
- What authority does a declaration of emergency give policymakers?
  (Legal-Emergency Declaration)
- Are liability questions addressed by a declaration of emergency?
  (Legal-Emergency Declaration)
- Who is responsible for documentation of actions, costs, etc.?
  (Reporting Procedures)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE--THE EXPLODING CIRCLE APPROACH

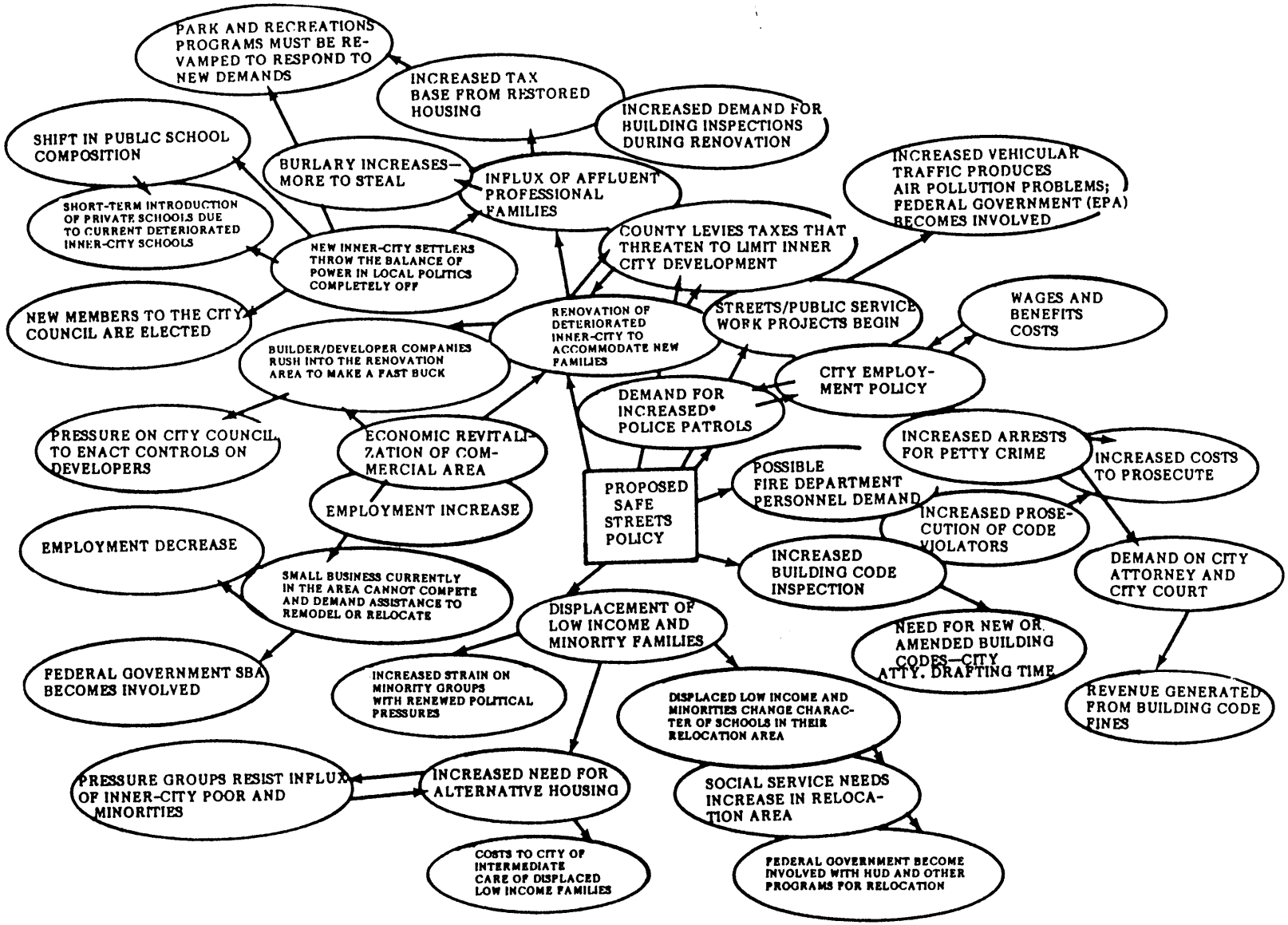


The systems approach in policy analysis emphasizes the interaction of a broad range of issues and entities. Establishing a policy can initiate so many actions and reactions that foreseeing the total effect is almost impossible. To graphically demonstrate the ramifications of what appears to be a relatively simple policy statement--a desire to have safe streets--the following exercise is used. Called the exploding circle, it reveals just a few of the hundreds of possible outcomes of pursuing a policy.

In the center of the next page is the core policy statement from which radiates various predictable consequences. There will be a demand for more police which, in turn will affect -the city employment policy and cost more money. More police, in turn, mean more arrests, therefore, more demands on the city prosecutor and courts. Safety includes fire protection, which translates into pressures for increased fire staff, inspectors, investigators, and fire education specialists. Then, more building inspectors will be needed--because, to some officials, that is where fire safety begins--leading to stepped-up enforcement of building and zoning codes. That, too, will influence the city attorney's office and the courts. The process continues. By following the arrows outward, one can easily see the likely results of taking what originally appeared to be a simple course of action. Ultimately, any safe streets program is tied to economic revitalization of an area, resulting in renovation of housing and the influx of new residents who will, in turn, make new demands on city hall and can completely redefine the original policy of safe streets into green streets (more parks) or better traffic flow (safer for the residents to for people), and so on.

The circle can explode outward to extreme limits and, at the same time, constantly turn inward, redefining the basic policy and altering the effects. The more you examine the policy through the exploding circle concept, the more you will see how far-reaching and interacting many of the issues are. You will quickly appreciate that the application of any one policy cannot be done in isolation, that sequences of events can alter the original pattern drastically, and that many forces beyond your immediate control will have a significant effect--especially during an emergency. A second exploding circle is to be completed as part of a class activity. Then, groups will complete exploding circles for policy decisions related to mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

EXPLODING CIRCLE--PROPOSED SAFE STREETS POLICY



PLENARY GROUP EXPLODING CIRCLE EXAMPLE

PROPOSED HAZARDOUS MATERIALS TRANSPORTATION ROUTE POLICY

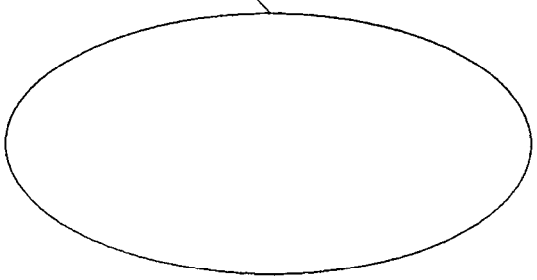
NOTES

EXPLODING CIRCLE EXERCISE

Group One

MITIGATION

Prevent the occurrence of hazardous situations by establishing land use and density regulations.

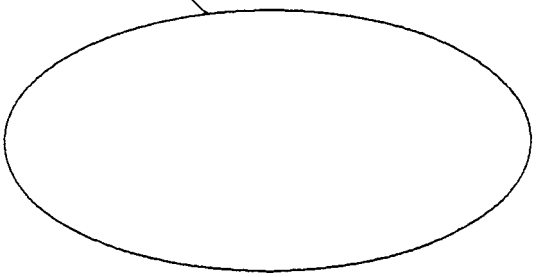


EXPLODING CIRCLE EXERCISE

Group Two

PREPAREDNESS

Develop coordinated response plans and procedures for responding to hazardous materials incidents.

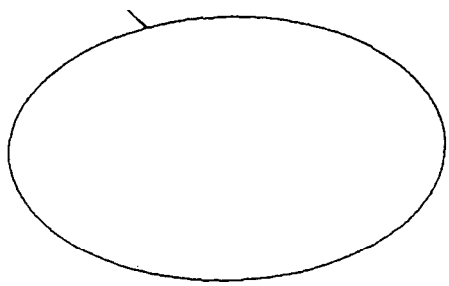


EXPLODING CIRCLE EXERCISE

Group Three

RESPONSE (EMERGENCY CONDITIONS)

Open community shelters to house and feed evacuees.

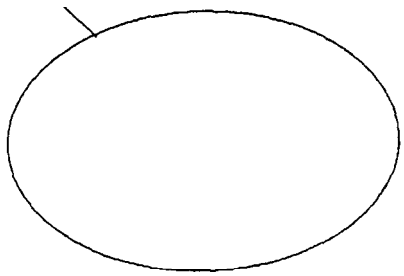


EXPLODING CIRCLE EXERCISE

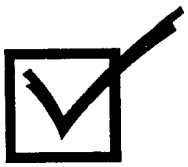
Group Four

RECOVERY

Complete the tasks needed to deal with the effects of an earthquake on the community.



LIABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE



1. As a public official, are you immune from being sued in connection with your job? YES_ NO_

2. If an "Act of God" disaster strikes your community, is there liability to your government if lives and property are lost? YES_ NO_

3. If a-known hazard exists, but nothing has been done to mitigate the hazard, are you or your government liable if a disaster results from the hazard? YES_ NO_

4. Do you know your liability if you forcibly evacuate persons from a disaster scene? YES_ NO_

5. Do you know if a local declaration of emergency addresses liability questions? YES_ NO_

6. Do you know if your jurisdiction is liable if a volunteer disaster worker is injured? YES_ NO_

7. Is your jurisdiction liable if someone is injured at a school which is being utilized as a shelter? YES_ NO_

8. If your jurisdiction has an inadequate warning system to warn the public of an impending disaster, is your jurisdiction liable? YES_ NO_

9. If your emergency management officials are untrained in Emergency Operations Center procedures, and lives and property are lost because of a lack of effective management of resources during a disaster, is your jurisdiction liable? YES_ NO_

10. Will a well-trained emergency management staff and a comprehensive emergency management plan that addresses all hazards reduce your jurisdiction's liability in disaster situations? YES_ NO_

UNIT SUMMARY

After completing this section, your instructor will summarize the main ideas and concepts that were presented and discussed. List any comments or questions you might have, along with any notes for further discussion.

NOTES